

BITS OF GOLD

Montana Talking Book Library

A Department of the Montana State Library
Regional Library of the National Library Service
for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
(NLS/BPH)

Volume 107, Number 2

November 2007

LIBRARIAN'S LOG: from the desk of Christie Briggs, Regional Librarian.

CONNECTING THE DOTS... 2007 OUTREACH TRIPS



The completion of our planned 2007 outreach trips included Hamilton, Missoula, Polson, Kalispell, Billings and Miles City. I am grateful for the opportunity to share our services and wish to thank each community for embracing our presentations. I also extend appreciation to my staff: Lee Madison, Sandy Stanton and Linda Miles for their excellent presentations and a special thanks to Diane Gunderson, Carolyn Meier and our great volunteers for making it possible to accomplish. Special thanks goes to Brian McCutcheon, our Americorps*VISTA volunteer, for planning and traveling on most of the trips before ending his VISTA time with us. Statewide Technology Librarians Maggie Meredith, Tracy Cook and Suzanne Reymer assisted in the 2007 planning. Trip highlights included "connecting in person with patrons", "meeting with the public library staff", "sharing our love of books", "the hospitality" and much more. We are already planning our 2008 trips!

NEWSPAPERS AND LIBRARY DOORS

What do they have in common? Newspapers and Library doors open to provide access to information. Whether you choose to turn on the radio, go online, call on the phone or receive your newspaper on your doorstep, you have access to information. Whether you choose to pickup your audio books at the library, receive them through the mail, or download them, you have access to information. By doing this we all keep up on current events and stay informed, as well as discuss and question what we read or listen to. The Talking Book Library is fortunate to offer patrons a choice in newspaper service, whether it is a free subscription to Newsline®, or a referral to free Radio Reading Service.

Because of a misleading newspaper article that announced the Montana State Library would be closing its doors, we have received questions over whether the doors of the Talking Book Library would remain open to library patrons. Let me assure you that the entire Montana State Library, including the Talking Book Library, continues to

welcome patrons to the Library Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Talking Book Library also offers tours, but please do call for an appointment.

Let me take this opportunity to answer patron questions we have received:

Will the State Library “close its doors?” Absolutely not. The State Library is a public building and will remain open to the public. The State Library is currently examining changes in access to its print collection as it works to make its state publications collection available digitally. Whatever the outcome of that decision, it will **not** affect Montana Talking Book Library patrons. For over 75 years, the vast majority of MTBL’s services have been offered to our patrons through the mail. We will continue to mail books, magazines, and equipment, thanks to our six employees and 100 volunteers.

Are library collections changing? Always. We have been able to add phone-in newspapers, downloadable Braille and digital books and magazines in addition to online cassette book ordering through our WebOpac.

We continue to strive to find better ways to bring you needed information and materials from which you can choose to improve your lives in this great home we share, Montana.

FUNDING DIGITAL MACHINES

“**That all may read**” is the mission of the National Library Service and the Montana Talking Book Library. We continue to offer FREE services to those who are eligible and want it. As we all work to level the playing field with new technology opportunities for low vision and blind patrons, we must continue to offer our services for FREE. National Library Service employees have done a superior job at evaluating what the “best” and most “cost effective” next step in technology will be for the majority of all United States citizens who receive Talking Book Library services.

As you read this newsletter, our U.S. Congress is hard at work on appropriation bills with a goal for completion by the end of November. A major portion (approximately \$12 million) of the original \$19.1 million requested by NLS has “tentatively” been approved. This still falls short of what is needed and necessary to carry the National Library Service through its four year digital transition plan in producing enough digital machines for all patrons nationwide by 2012.

It is our hope that patrons will support the full National Library Service budget request of \$19.1 million over four years (or \$4+ million per year) in the event you might be discussing or corresponding with our U.S. Congressional delegation. Many patrons are on fixed incomes and could not afford the nearly \$300.00 digital machine from a private vendor if this is not fully funded.



This photo shows the new digital talking book (DTB) machine and the digital cartridge in the mailing container. The digital player is quite different from the current player.

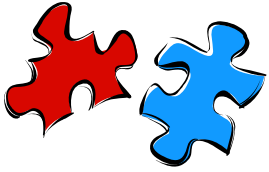
Some notable changes:

- It is about one-third the size and one-fourth the weight
- Extra controls allow bookmarking and searching on the advanced models
- A sleep button can be set to shut off the machine automatically
- The control button will announce its use and setting, if the cartridge has been removed
- The digital machine has no moving parts; the battery will have a longer charge cycle and the audio has been improved
- The player has a USB port to play other audio files, such as MP3 files.

The cartridge is slightly smaller than a cassette, but has these features:

- The end of the cartridge has a thumbhole to make loading easier
- Most cartridges contain an entire book, so no more changing tapes or getting tapes out of order
- The cartridge will only load one way
- No rewinding is required.

In March 2007 NLS stopped production of the current machine, the C-1. Montana has been allocated a certain number of digital machines, but not enough for every patron. NLS's policy requires machines go first to veterans, then to patrons 100 years of age. We are keeping a list of patrons who are interested in changing to the digital machines and books as soon as possible. Keep in mind that the cassette players will be in use for many years to come.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION LUNCHEON:

The Montana Talking Book Library honored its volunteers at a Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon at the Helena Elks Lodge #193 on Tuesday, September 25, 2007. The theme of the luncheon was “Volunteers – The Essential Piece” and everyone enjoyed the puzzle decorations and gifts. Helena author Janet Spencer entertained the group with “Montana pieces of information” in a trivia game based on her book “Montana Trivia”.

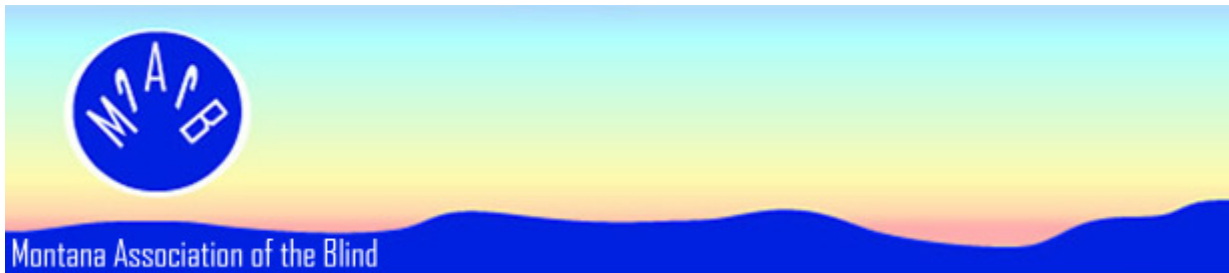
Awards were presented to those with several years of service-- 25 years-Donna Anders; 10 years- Bonnie Anderson, Dorothy Carpenter, Jim Daily, Brittany Eldredge, Sharon Larson, Glen Rasmussen; 5 years- Al Adams, Sharon Koch, Bettye Madison, Lorna McMurray, Mike Sullivan, Tom Tompkins. Diane Gunderson, Coordinator of Volunteers, presented to Bonnie Anderson, Ed Canty and Al Tompkins the Recording Team of the Year award. The Special Appreciation award was presented to Jean Smith by Christie Briggs, Regional Librarian. Frank Flynn was given the Telephone Pioneer award by Darlene Staffeldt, State Librarian. The Montana Talking Book Library also honored seven youth volunteers. The Youth Appreciation Awards were presented to Eva Bossell, Keenan Cox, Caroline Freistadt, Bethan Galloway, Thomas Lund, Brynn McKinney, and Jordan Phillips. The Youth Appreciation Awards were presented by State Superintendent of Schools Linda McCulloch. Without the help of all volunteers, we would not be able to deliver the level of services we provide and keep the Library puzzle together. Thank you.

ABOUT THOSE MAGAZINES:

Please return any magazine that comes from our library; these are ones that arrive in plastic containers, including large print Readers Digest. Cassettes and plastic boxes are reused; the large print magazines are sent to other subscribers.

Magazines in paper containers do not need to be returned.

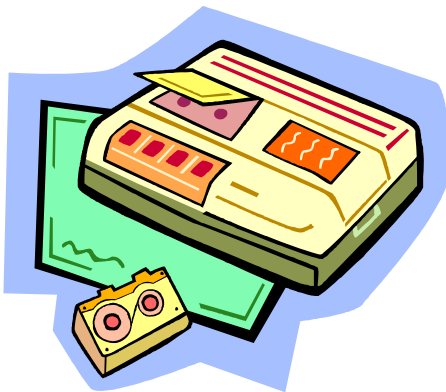
Remember—if you subscribe to a magazine from MTBL, you will not receive the next issue until the previous one is returned!



ITEMS FROM THE MONTANA ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND:

Know How to Cook? If you have always wanted to run a cafeteria business, **Montana Business Enterprise** has employment opportunities for Montanans who are legally blind. For qualifications, application and training information, please contact: **Sam Hubbard:** shubbard@shubbard.com or call **406-459-5971**

The Montana Association for the Blind has 2008 large print calendars now available for \$3.00 each. Contact: **Jerry Hutch**, 2008 Calendar Chairperson- **406-443-2947**



NOTES FROM THE READER ADVISORS:

We are asking Volunteers to call patrons about overdue books, so if you have had some books since spring or summer, please return them promptly! This will allow new books to be sent. If you are not using your machine, please return it to MTBL.

We are entering a busy time at MTBL. If your phone call to your Reader Advisor goes to voice mail, PLEASE leave a message! Include your name, city, and phone number—your call will be returned.

Otherwise, call back on our toll free number (**1-800-332-3400**) at your convenience. Please help our volunteer tape inspectors with incoming books by

- Including all the tapes of the same book – the number of cassettes is noted on the outside label of the box and is stated by the reader at the beginning of each book.
- Checking that all cassettes are from that particular book. If you find a stray cassette, call your reader advisor. Rewinding the tapes is appreciated, but not essential.

PATRON PICKS:

RC 59768 Start Late, Finish Rich: a No-Fail Plan for Achieving Financial Freedom at Any Age by David Bach.

RC 34546 Baghdad without a Map and Other Misadventures in Arabia by Tony Horwitz. Published in 1992. Written with “a sense of humor and eye for detail, (Horwitz) presents the turbulent Middle East from the vantage point of the ‘man on the street.’” (Library Journal)

RC 62834 1968: The Year That Rocked the World by Mark Kurlansky. A political and social history of a not-so-distant time.

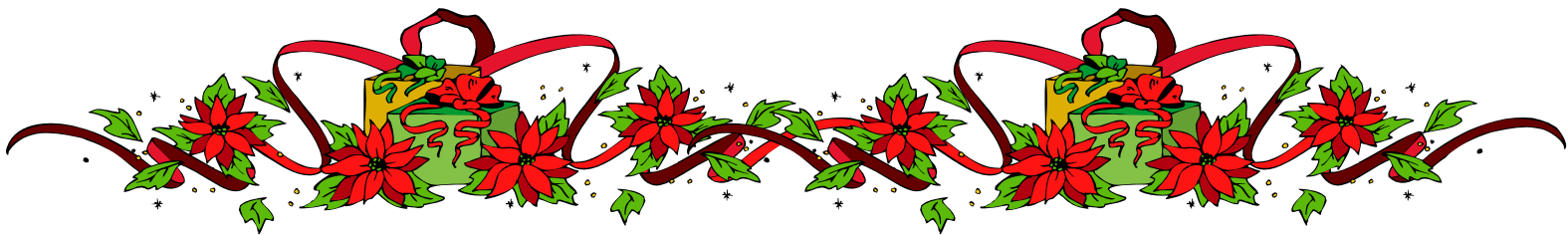
RC 63761 Ninety Minutes in Heaven: a True Story of Death and Life by Don Piper. Non-fiction account of one man’s experience of heaven and return to earth after a devastating automobile accident

RC 61789 Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman’s Search for Everything across Italy, India, and Indonesia by Elizabeth Gilbert. Lighthearted memoir with a theme of soul searching and spiritual recovery.

....and what’s a list without a good western?...

RC 59299 Cutthroat Gulch by Montana author Richard Wheeler

Remember to order extra books for the holidays!



HOLIDAYS OBSERVED: Library is Closed on:

Thursday, **November 22** (Thanksgiving Day)

Tuesday, **December 25** (Christmas Day)

Tuesday, **January 1** (New Year's Day)

Monday, **January 21** (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)

Monday, **February 18** (Presidents' Day)

SMILING RIGHT ALONG...

Groucho Marx said, "Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend. Inside of a dog it's too dark to read."



**Montana Talking Book Library
1515 East Sixth Avenue
PO Box 201800
Helena, MT 59620-1800**

**Free Matter
for the Blind**

Address Service Requested

This newsletter is available on cassette, e-mail and large print upon request or visit our website: <http://msl.mt.gov/tbl>

LIBRARY HOURS: Mon-Fri 8am-5pm
PHONE NUMBERS: 1-800-332-3400
WEBOPAC: <http://klasweb.msl.mt.gov>

PHONE HOURS: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
(in Helena) 406-444-2064
WEBBRAILLE: <http://loc.gov/nls/braille>

REGIONAL LIBRARIAN:
COORD. VOL /DIR RECORDING SVC:
COLLECTION MANAGER:
MACHINE LENDING AGENT:
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For patron requests or contact information, e-mail us at: mtbl@mt.gov

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